

ACTS CHAPTER 12:1-25

Not Even a King Can Stop God's Plan



10

May 15, 2005
2.ACT10

Lesson Goal

Students will understand that God will humble those who are proud.

Lesson Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Explain what King Herod did to James and Peter.
- Explain what the church did in response to Peter's imprisonment.
- Explain why and how God punished Herod.
- Explain what happened to the church despite Herod's persecution.

Memory Verse

Acts 12:24 ~ *"But the word of God continued to increase and spread."*

Application

- Pray in every circumstance.
- Ask the Lord to give you a humble heart.
- Trust the Lord in the midst of difficult circumstances.
- Pray that our rulers and kings would come to know Christ.

TEACHER PLANNING SHEET

Prepare Your Heart

- Read and study through the passage meditatively.
- Prayerfully seek how God would have you personally apply this passage to your own life. Write these down.

Prepare the Lesson

- Choose from the various ideas in the lesson plan.
- Write down an approximate time frame for each.
- List the materials needed.

HOOK

Time

BOOK

Time

LOOK

Time

TOOK

Time

Materials Needed:

ACTS CHAPTER 12:1-25

Not Even a King Can Stop God's Plan



10

1st–3rd Grade
May 15, 2005
2.ACT10EL

MEMORY
VERSE
✧
“But the Word
of God
continued to
increase and
spread.”
Acts 12:24
✧

SHOOK _____

Knock, Knock Jokes (Jokes). Tell a few short “Knock, Knock, Who’s There?” jokes. Let the students tell a few of their own, but preview them first! Tell the students that in today’s Bible Adventure they are going to learn about what happened as the early church believers prayed, and how they couldn’t believe it when Peter said, “Knock, Knock.”

Sleep Talking (Discussion). Share some of your sleeping habits with each other. For example:

1. Does anyone snore?
2. Does anyone walk or talk in their sleep?
3. Who will admit to drooling?
4. Do you wake up easily or sleep heavily?
5. How do you wake up in the morning?
6. Is it hard to wake you?

Tell them that in today’s story they will find Peter sleeping heavily in a situation where most people would find it hard to relax at all. How is Peter awakened?

Heavenly Remote Control (Video). Prepare a videotape of an automatic gate in operation. There are many secured housing areas that have these gates. Show the video to the students. Did they have this kind of gate in Bible times? Maybe they did. Read Acts 12:10. “They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it.” Tell them that in today’s Bible adventure they are going to see how God did some amazing things as he released Peter from prison.

Power of Prayer (Discussion). Ask the following questions:

1. What is prayer?
2. Should we pray everyday?
3. How do we know when God has answered our prayers?

Ask the students if they can recall a specific answer to prayer. Have the students share with the class answers to prayer that they have received. Have them share a time when they did not think prayer was answered. Tell them that in today’s Bible lesson they will learn about a time when God answered the specific prayers of the believers as they prayed for Peter.

Rhyme Time (Game). Divide the students into teaching groups. Have each team choose a secretary who can write quickly. Have each team write as many words as they can that rhyme with these words as you give them slowly, one by one. Jail; guard; night; wake; gate; house; girl; door; mind; knock; tell; pray. Give each group one point for each rhyming word and a bonus of 10 points if they have “day” as a rhyming word for pray. Give the winning team the option of earning 1000 bonus points if within 10 seconds they can make a sentence out of the above 12 original words. Write “We need to PRAY each and every DAY” on the board. This is the main point of today’s lesson.



Presentation Ideas

Peter in Jail (Illustration/Coloring Page). Acts 12:4-5, 2.ACT10EL.GF1.

Peter at the Gate (Illustration/Coloring Page). Acts 12:10, 2.ACT10EL.GF2.

Bible Adventure for 1st- 3rd grades

Have you seen those Magic Eye pictures? (*Bring in Magic Eye picture or book and let children try to see picture.*) You take the picture and stare at it, only you let your eyes relax and pretend you are looking right through the page. You do that for about 30 seconds, and then right in the middle of all these swirls and blobs of color, an image stands out from the page like magic. Wow! You think. That is really cool! Every once in a while, though, you run across someone who for one reason or another is not able to make the image stand out, no matter what they do. In spite of all their efforts and their frustration, they just can’t see what’s right in front of them. That happens to some of the disciples in our Bible Adventure today.

We’ve been learning about the spread of the Gospel from Jerusalem to parts of Judea and Samaria, and now that the Gospel was being preached to the Gentiles, even to the ends of the earth. The twelfth chapter of Acts picks up some ten to thirteen years after the death and resurrection of Jesus. King Herod Agrippa I was now in power. (This Herod was the grandson of Herod the Great, who had all the male children under two years of age killed in an attempt to find and kill Jesus.) Herod was looking for ways to impress and get on the good side of the Jewish leadership in Jerusalem. He arrested some of the disciples, including James, the brother of John. Showing no fear of God whatsoever, he had James put to death with a sword. This was just fine with the Jewish leaders, so Herod decided to arrest Peter as well. He intended to put Peter on public trial right after Passover. **In the meantime, he threw him into prison and took care that Peter was held securely.** Everyone was aware of the uncanny way these disciples were able escape from jail! Herod was going to take no chance that Peter might escape, so he ordered four squads of four soldiers each to guard the Apostle. At any given time, Peter was chained to two soldiers and two others stood guard outside the

door. We're talking maximum security here! **Peter was kept in prison, and all that time the Church was praying, putting their trust in another kind of maximum security--the power of God to work in impossible situations.**

Herod thought he held Peter in the palm of his hand, but events were about to unfold that would show him how faulty his thinking was. On the night before Herod planned to bring Peter out of prison and put him on trial, Peter was sleeping inside, chained between the two soldiers. As usual, other soldiers stood guard at the doors. **Suddenly an angel appeared in Peter's cell.** Even the light from this heavenly being was not enough to wake up Peter. The angel had to poke him in the side to do the job. As Peter awoke, the angel said to him, "Quick, get up!" **The chains that had held Peter's wrists so tightly immediately fell off. The angel told Peter to get dressed and to follow him.** Peter did, but the whole thing seemed very unreal to him. He thought that God was showing him another vision. The angel led Peter past the first and second guards and finally to the big iron gate that led into the city. The gate opened by itself, and they walked through it. There was no outcry, no challenge, not even the squeak of a rusty gate to stop them. It was not until they had walked the length of one street and the angel left him that Peter realized this was no dream or vision--this was real!! He knew that God had sent the angel to rescue him from what Herod and the Jewish leadership were planning for him.

Peter was rejoicing in this when it suddenly occurred to him that it probably was not too safe for him to be hanging around on the streets. Right away he headed for the home of Mary, the mother of Peter's friend, John Mark. Mary's home was probably a place where believers met often to pray and worship together. **Actually, a large group of people had gathered there that evening to pray for Peter.** Because of the persecution of Christians going on at that time, doors were kept locked when the believers met. When Peter reached the house, he knocked on the outer gate, **and a servant girl named Rhoda came to see who was there.** Peter was at the gate! Hallelujah!! She was so excited she left him standing there and ran back into the house to tell the others. "Peter is at the door!" she announced. How did they respond? "Great, Rhoda! Go let him in!" Nope. "You're out of your mind," they told her. Everyone was thinking the same thing. "Peter's locked up tight, no chance for escape. We've lost James, and it's possible we'll lose Peter, too. Now go away and let us keep on praying for him." But Rhoda knew what she had seen with her own two eyes, and she kept insisting that Peter was outside. "Well, it can't be Peter," they thought. "It must be his angel." Can you believe it? The answer to their prayers was just a few feet away, but they couldn't see it!

In the meantime, Peter was out at the gate. "Ah, Rhoda? Rhoda? Wait! Don't go. Let me in, it's not safe out here. Rhoda?" He kept knocking, and finally they opened the door and saw him standing there. Even though they had been praying for his release, they were so amazed to see him there was quite an uproar, and Peter had to quiet them down before they all were arrested. He told them how God had brought him out of

prison. He asked them to tell James, Jesus' brother, and the other disciples about what had happened. Then he left them.

In the morning, it was chaos at the jail when Peter's disappearance was discovered. After Herod had a thorough search made for Peter, he questioned the soldiers about it. Since they had no answers, Herod ordered them executed.

Optional:

[You may have wondered what happened to Herod Agrippa I. He met the same ultimate fate that all men do who dare to challenge God and stand in the way of His plans and purposes. He left Judea and went to Caesarea and stayed there a while. Having deceived himself as to his own importance, he appeared before a group of important men from two nearby cities, all dressed up in silver clothing which shone in the sun. Dazzled by the sight, the people kept crying out, "This is the voice of a god, not of a man." Herod, pleased by their praise and eating it up, did not bother to correct what they were saying. Because he did not give praise due to God, an angel of the Lord immediately struck him down. So that the whole world would know he was nothing more than a man, he was eaten by worms and died.]

We live in a country where the freedom we enjoy can cause us to take things for granted--like the freedom to gather together to pray without fear of arrest. We don't feel danger, so we don't feel motivated to pray. **But the Bible teaches us that prayer is not just an option on the menu. It's necessary for our spiritual survival.** Look at the example Jesus set of sincere, fervent, and frequent prayer. Look at the example the early Church left us--they devoted themselves to prayer. Don't forget to look for God's answers. Sometimes they may come in a way we do not expect--like Peter at the gate! Exercise your faith in God. When you pray, believe He will answer. And when the answer comes, don't be taken by surprise. Thank Him, and keep on praying!

Aim Questions:

- 1. What did King Herod do to James and to Peter?** *He had James killed, and put Peter in prison.*
 - 2. How did the Church respond to Peter's imprisonment?** *They prayed fervently for him.*
 - 3. Tell in your own words how Peter escaped from Prison.**
 - 4. How do you think prayer helped the situation?**
 - 5. Why do you think the people at the prayer meeting were hesitant to accept the words of Rhoda the servant girl?** *Because it was the middle of the night and they knew that Peter was in jail.*
 - 6. How do you think we could be better at recognizing God's answers to prayer than the people in this chapter were?**
-



LOOK

Check It Out! (Worksheet). Have the students black out the spaces on the checkerboard which contain the letters noted. **Debrief:** If we truly believe the revealed message, how should we then pray? How was the church praying for Peter when he was in prison? How should we be praying daily? Does “praying earnestly” only happen when we’re in trouble? How did Jesus pray? **2.ACT10EL.GF3.**

Peter, Get Dressed (Paper Doll Craft). When the angel woke Peter up, he said, “Put on your clothes and sandals. Wrap your cloak around you and follow me.” Cut out the Peter paper doll. Cut out his clothes and help him get dressed, **2.ACT10EL.GF4.** Remind the students that it was through prayer of believers and the power of the Holy Spirit that Peter got out of jail.

Prayer Chain (Craft). Each student will need:
2.ACT10EL.GF5 copied onto colored paper
scissors
glue

Have the students cut apart the verse strips from **2.ACT10EL.GF5.** Have them make a paper chain by linking the correct words together so that the verse is in order. Make sure students make loops with the words printed on the outside. Printing the verse on the board will facilitate the assembly. **Debrief:** Read Acts 12:5-7. How was Peter bound while he was in prison? Who appeared to Peter the night before his trial? What was the Church doing while Peter was in prison? What happened to the chains on Peter’s wrist?

Peter at the Gate (Activity/Craft). Each student needs:
a pre-assembled book, **2.ACT10EL.GF6 Pgs. 1-6**
coloring crayons
scissors

Have the students color and cut the characters on the lines where indicated. Read the story; don't get mixed up!

Peter Pops Up (Craft). Copy **2.ACT10EL.GF7 Pg. 1** onto regular white paper and **2.ACT10EL.GF7 Pg. 2** onto card stock. Then, prepare **2.ACT10EL.GF7 Pg. 2** for each student prior to class by cutting only on heavy lines with an Exact-o Knife. Help the students make this pop-up book by carefully following the directions below:

1. Color the pop-up picture of Peter at the gate on **2.ACT10EL.GF7 Pg. 2.**
2. Fold ----- lines with picture inside the fold.
3. Fold lines with picture outside the fold.
4. Fold pop-up cover on **2.ACT10EL.GF7 Pg. 1** in half.
5. Glue back of pop-up picture around outside edges of cover.

When the book is opened Peter is standing at the gate knocking, and Rhoda is running away to tell the others. Have the students tell the story in their own words.

A.C.T.S. 12:1-25 (Worksheet). King Herod had John's brother put to death by the sword. What was John's brother's name? *James*. When King Herod saw that this pleased the Jews, who did he put in jail? *Peter*. In what city were the Apostles? *Jerusalem*. What did King Herod do to James and to Peter? *James was killed and Peter was placed in Prison*. How was Peter released from jail? *Jailbreak by an angel*. **2.ACT10EL.GF8.**

Peter's Jailbreak (Worksheet/Crossword). Have the students complete this worksheet, **2.ACT10EL.GF9**. *Answers to the crossword puzzle.*

Across: 1) executed, 3) Acts, 4) vision, 6) worms, 9) cloak, 10) Peter, 11) Herod, 14) church, 15) sword. **Down:** 2) chains, 3) angel, 5) two, 7) Mary, 8) James, 10) Passover, 12) Jews, 13) Rhoda.

A Closer Look (Worksheet). Have the students follow the directions to complete this worksheet, **2.ACT10EL.GF10**.

Trusting the Lord (Memory Verse Word Search). Have the students complete this worksheet as a class to reveal the memory verse, **2.ACT10EL.GF11 Pg. 1**. *Answer key: 2.ACT10EL.GF11 Pg. 2.*

Aim Questions (Worksheet). Have the students answer the Aim Questions about today's Bible Adventure, **2.ACT10EL.GF12**.



TOOK _____

Hello! Is Anyone Out There? (Worksheet). Ask the students, "What is our direct link to God?" Find out by using correct letters from the picture words, **2.ACT10EL.GF13**. If this worksheet is done in class, use this time to discuss the power of prayer. Bring in some real life answers to prayer that you might know of to make the discussion more real to the students.

Pray Every Day (Worksheet). Have the students find their way through the maze by spelling the word "PRAY" over and over again, **2.ACT10EL.GF14**. If this worksheet is done in class use this time to discuss the power of prayer, and the role that prayer plays in our lives. Be ready with some real life answers to prayer that you might know of to make the discussion more real to the students.

Prayer Line (Worksheet/Prayer Record). Tell the student that if we pray every day for God to "bless my family and all the missionaries," it will be difficult to recognize answers to prayer. This is a weekly prayer guide with two objectives: To encourage the students to pray for the needs of others as the early church prayed for Peter, and to encourage the students to pray specifically so they can see God's answers to their prayers. For each day of the week, list two or three specific things you can pray about (such as an opportunity to share the Gospel with people in these categories who need to know Christ). Use this guide for a few

weeks and watch God work, **2.ACT10EL.GF15**.

- **Every Day:** Confess any sin that would hinder your communion with God. Worship with praise and thanks (for answered prayer among other things).
- **Monday:** Friends and teachers at School
- **Tuesday:** Family including grandparents, etc.
- **Wednesday:** People in my neighborhood
- **Thursday:** My own needs
- **Friday:** Pray that the world leaders might come to know Christ
- **Saturday:** Church leaders and ministry needs
- **Sunday:** Missionaries

Where's PETER (Worksheet). Have the students find the letters of the word "PETER" hidden in the picture, **2.ACT10EL.GF16**. Then have them color the picture.

Yummy Herod (Snack/Discussion). For this snack/discussion you will need a cake and some gummy worms. The cake should be frosted and decorated with a man's face and crown to represent Herod. Use a chopstick to poke holes in the cake. Place gummy worms in the holes and lay the remainder of their body across the top of the cake. You can also lay extra worms on top of the cake in a heap and draping across the sides. Use this snack time to tell the rest of the story of what happened to Herod (under Bible Adventure "Optional"). Tell the students that the worms represented Herod's pride. His pride is what really ate him up because he did not give praise due to God.

This workbook is not available at this time.

A.C.T.S. Action Cards (Workbook). Encourage students to continue using the Apostle action cards to memorize the significant statistics throughout the book of Acts. The main events of Acts 12:1-25 are:

- A. James and Peter.
- C. In the city of Jerusalem.
- T. James is impaled, and Peter is jailed.
- S. Jailbreak by an angel.

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Where's PETER (Worksheet). Have the students find the letters of the word "PETER" hidden in the picture, **2.ACT10EL.GF16.** Then have them color the picture.

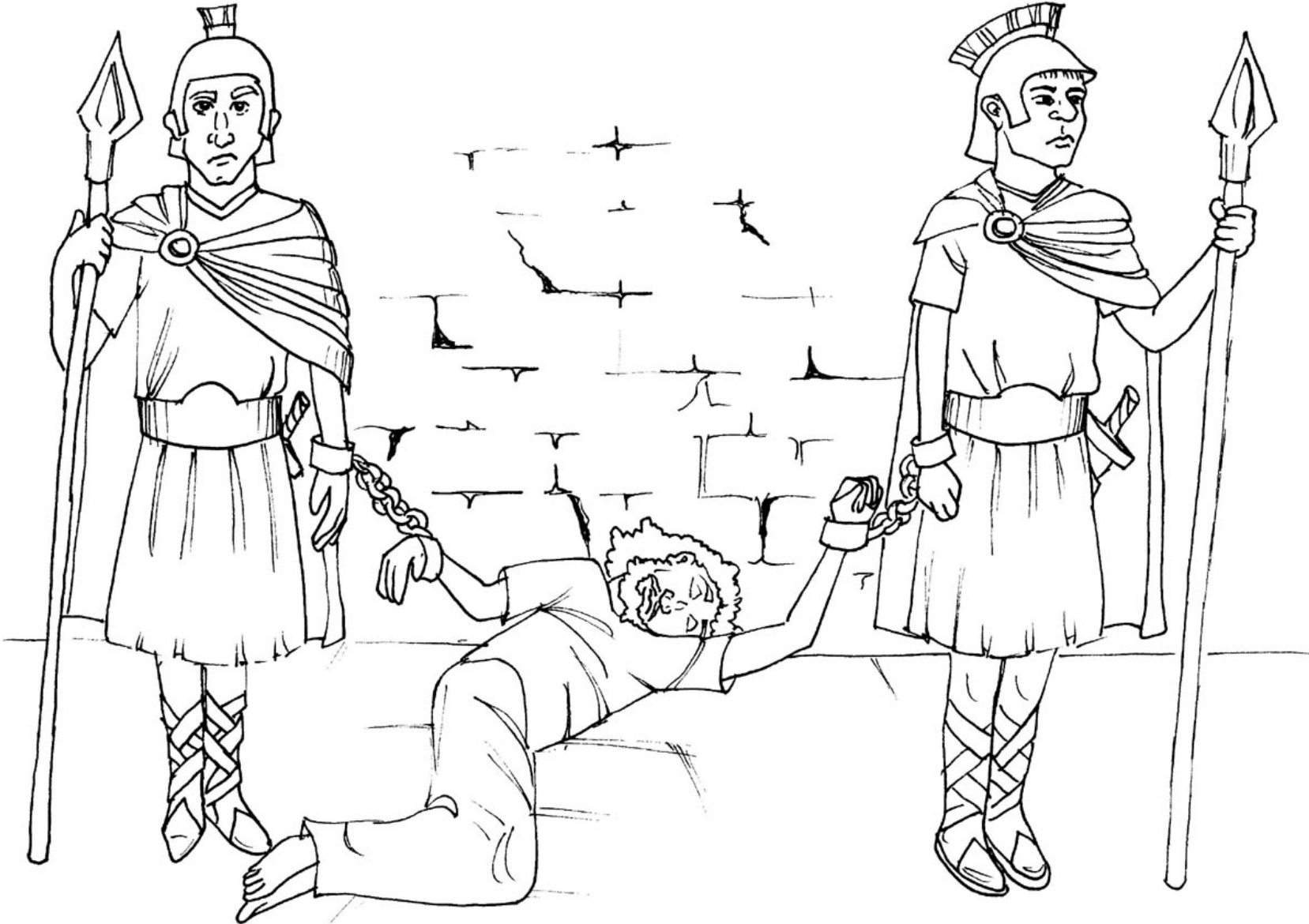
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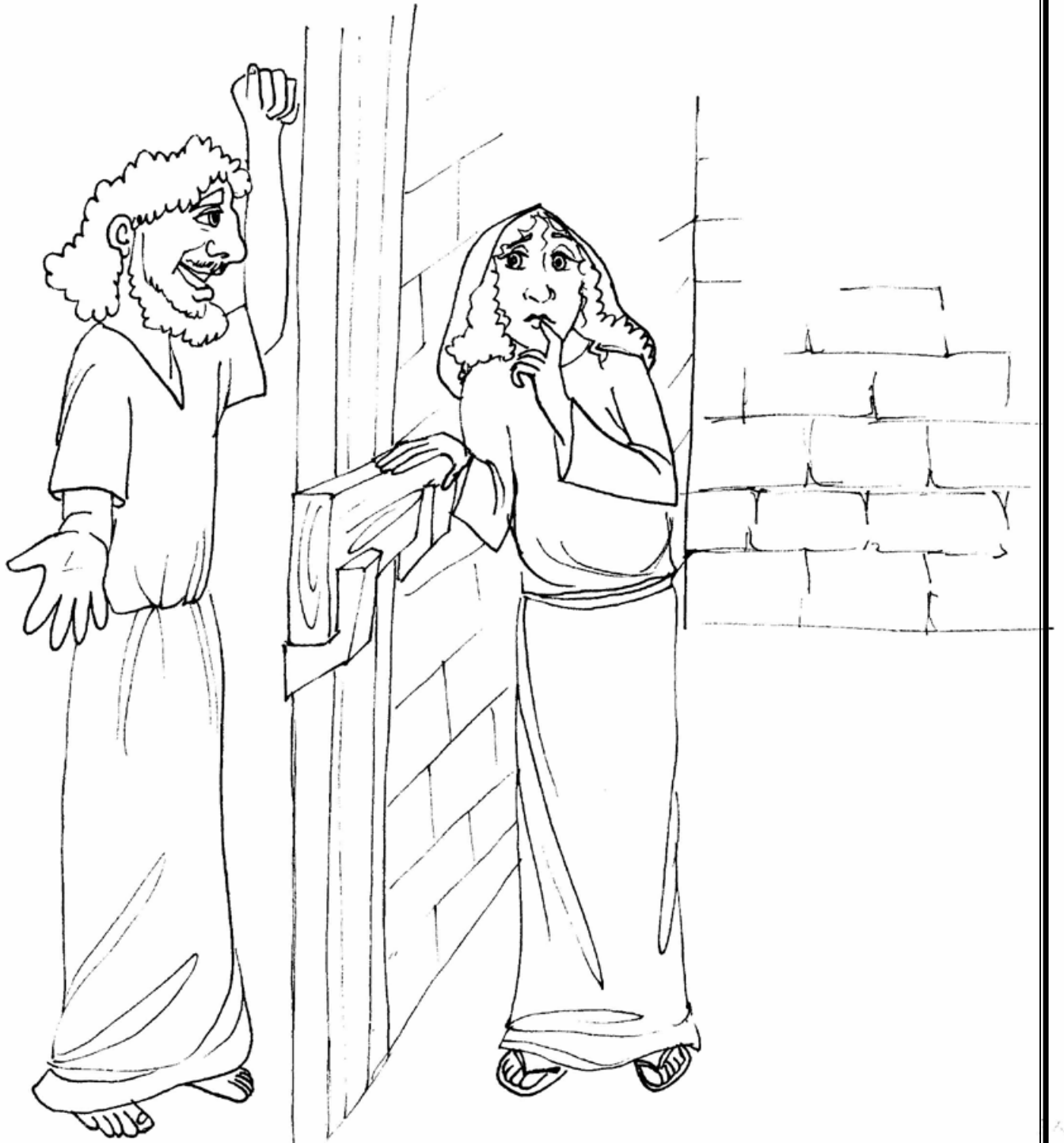
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- C. In the city of Jerusalem.
- T. James is impaled, and Peter is jailed.
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Peter in Jail



Peter at the Gate





Check It Out!



In the checkerboard below,
black out the spaces with the following letters:

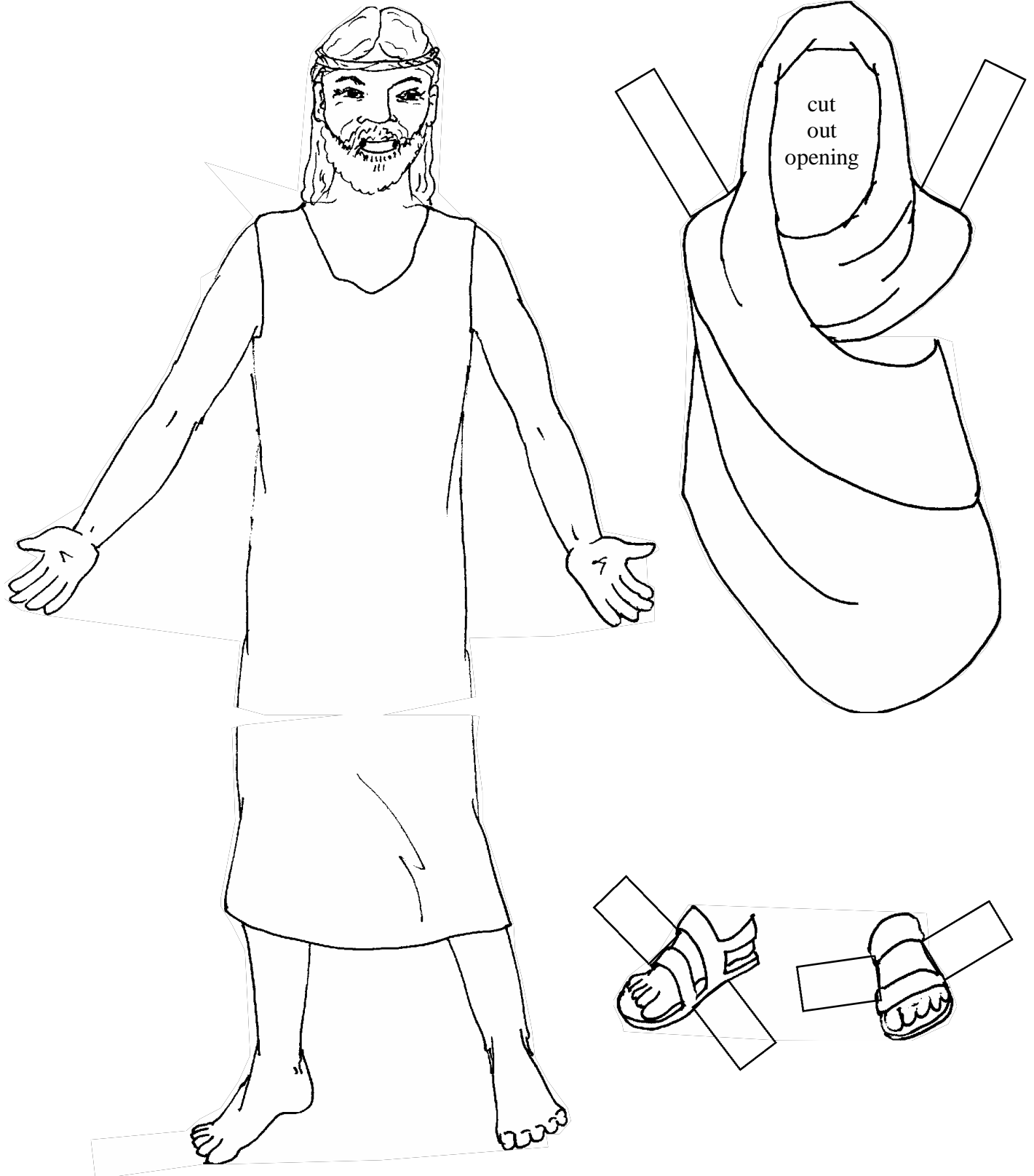
B C F H I J K L M Q T V X Z

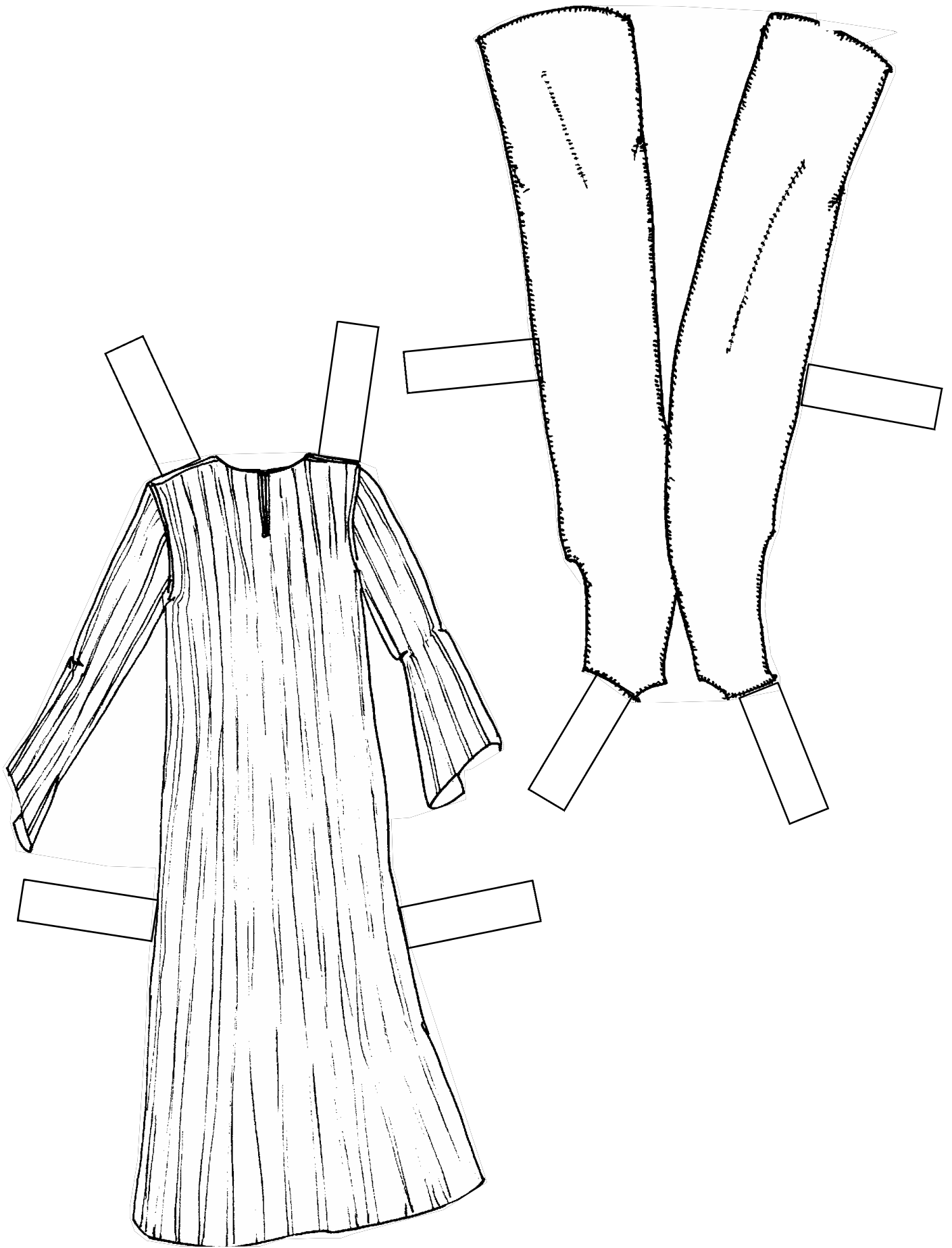
The remaining letters spell something that is very important to us.
If we truly believe this, how should we then pray?

B	C	F	H	I	G	J	O	K	D	L	M	Q	T	J	V
K	A	B	N	C	S	F	W	I	E	J	R	K	S	M	Q
H	J	Z	C	F	O	Z	U	B	R	K	L	M	X	H	I
B	P	H	R	M	A	Q	Y	X	E	F	R	H	S	Q	T

“So Peter was kept in prison, but the Church was earnestly praying to God for him.”
Acts 12:5

Peter, Get Dressed!





“So
Peter
was
kept
in
prison,
but
the
Church
was
earnestly
praying
to
God
for
him.” Acts 12:5

PETER AT THE GATE

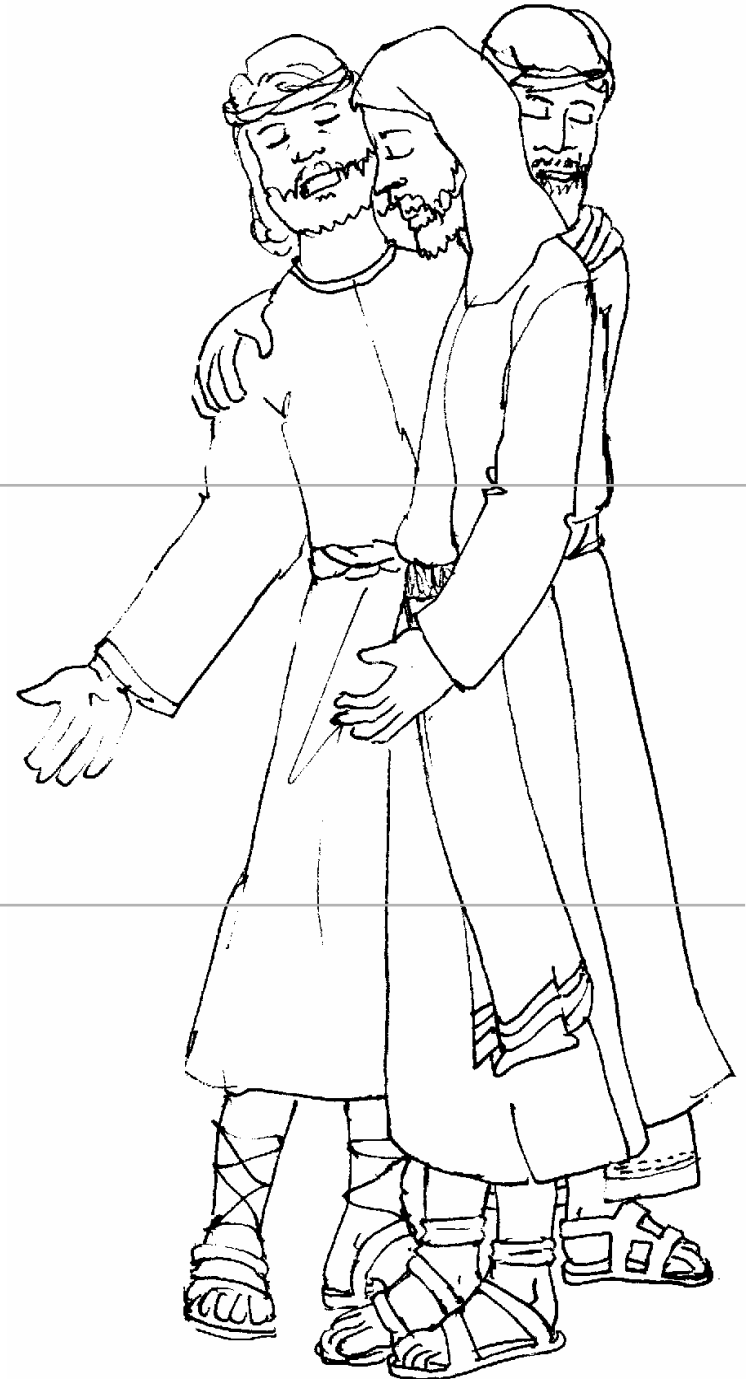


HEROD

**I persecuted the church because
it pleased the Jews.**

**I had James, the brother of John,
put to death.**

**I arrested Peter and planned a
public trial for him after the
Passover.**



THE CHURCH AT MARY'S HOUSE

We told Rhoda that she was out of her mind. When she insisted, we said she must have seen an angel.

But when Peter kept knocking, we opened the door. We were astonished to see him!

Peter told us all about how God had answered our prayers!

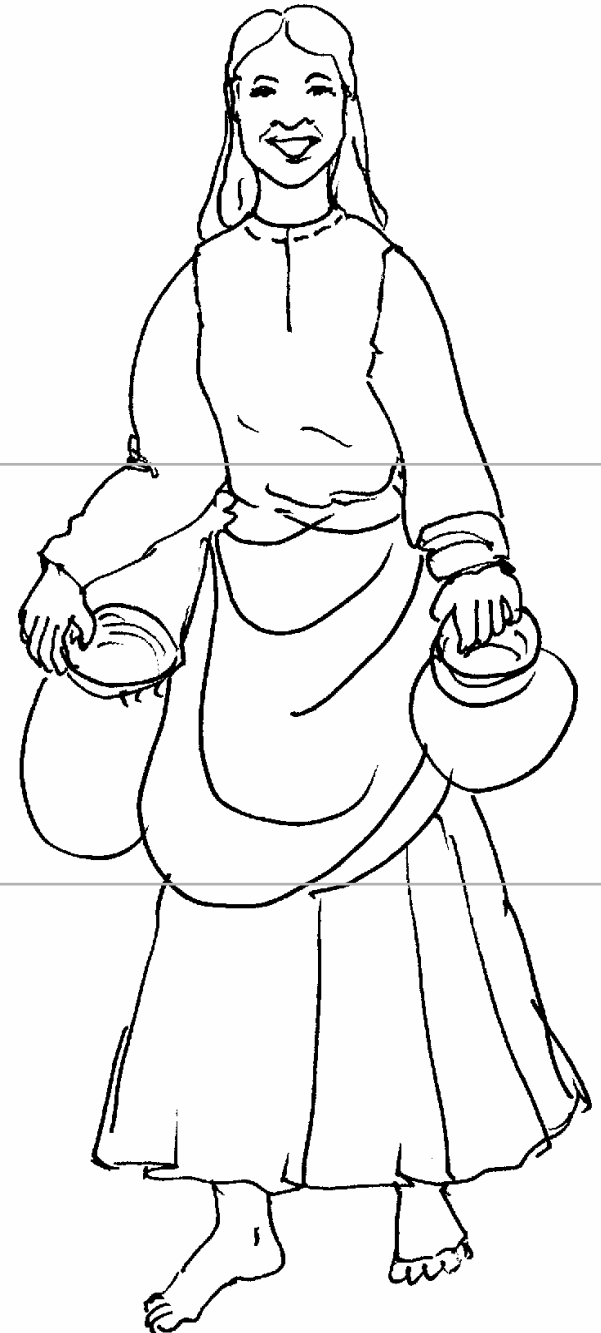


ANGEL

I appeared in Peter's jail cell
and woke him up.

I told Peter to get dressed.

I walked with Peter through the
city gate and then left him.



RHODA

**I am the servant girl who
came to the outer door when
Peter knocked.**

**When I heard Peter's voice,
I recognized him.**

**Overjoyed, I ran back and said,
"Peter is at the door!" but they
didn't believe me.**



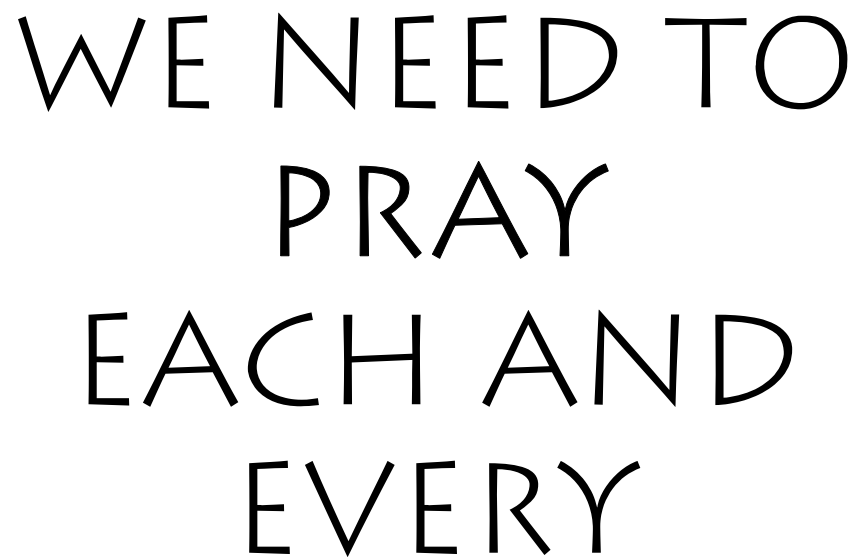
PETER

At first I thought I was seeing a vision, but after the angel left, I knew I had been rescued!

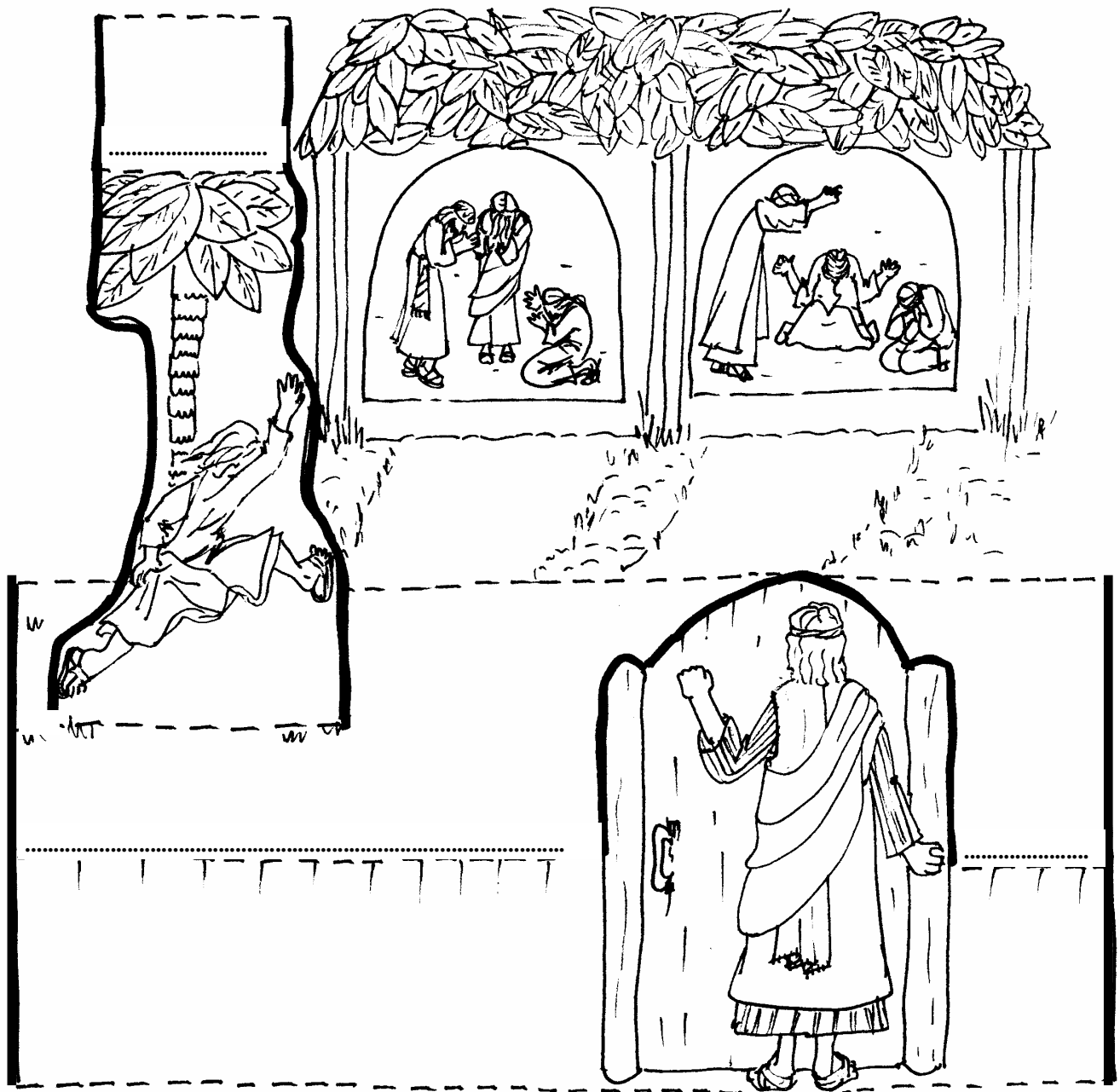
I went to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where many people were praying for me.

I knocked on the door of the outer entrance, and a servant girl came to answer.





WE NEED TO
PRAY
EACH AND
EVERY



“So, Peter was kept in prison, but the Church
was earnestly praying to God for him.”

Acts 12:5

A.C.T.S

12:1-25

Apostles – King Herod had John’s brother put to death by the sword.

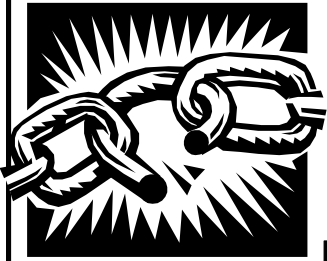
What was John’s brother’s name? When King Herod saw that this pleased the Jews, who did he put in jail?

City – In what city were the Apostles?

Trials/troubles – What did King Herod do to James and Peter?

Spirit – How was Peter released from jail?

“So Peter was kept in prison, but the Church was earnestly praying to God for him.”
Acts 12:5

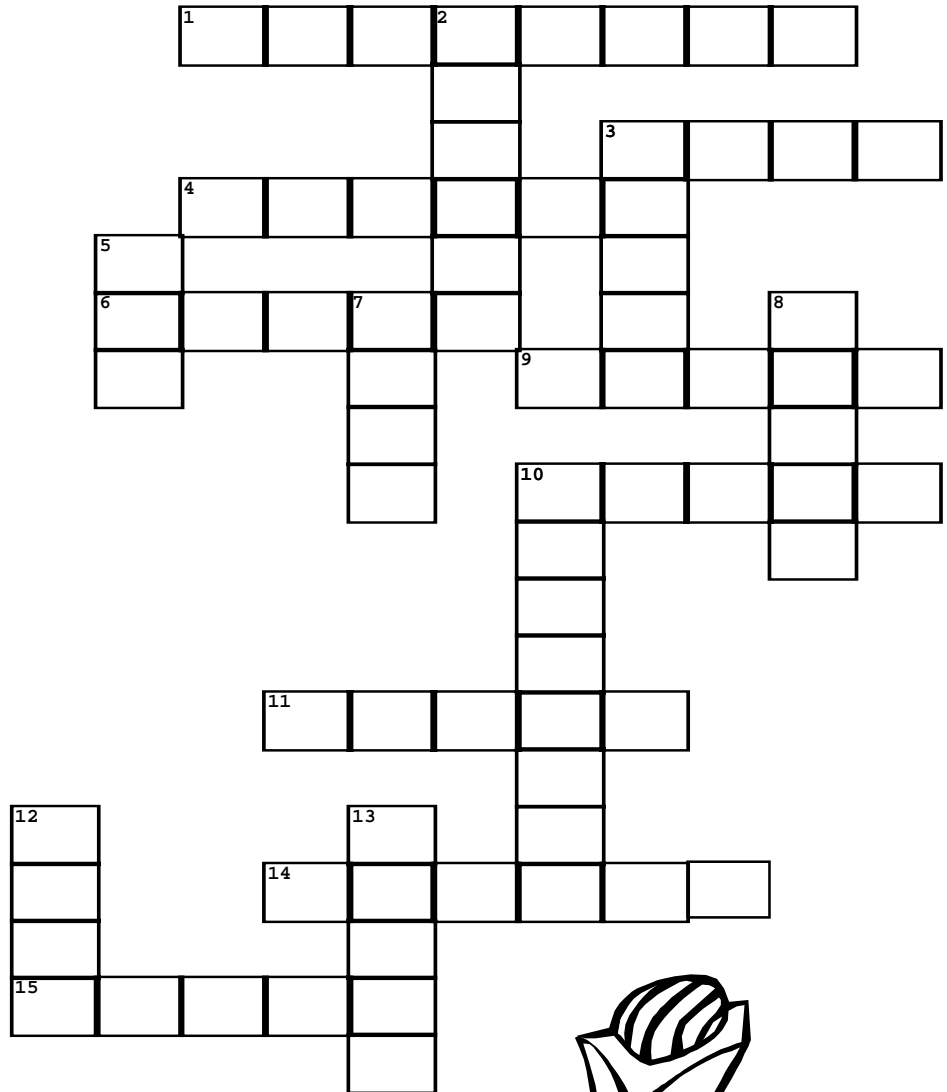


Peter's JailBreak



Across

1. Herod cross examined the guards and had them _____.
3. What book of the Bible are we studying?
4. When Peter was being released from jail, he thought he was having a _____.
6. After being struck down, King Herod was eaten by these.
9. What did the angel tell Peter to wrap around himself?
10. Who did King Herod seize after he killed James?
11. Who was the King that was persecuting the church?
14. Who was praying earnestly for Peter while he was in prison?
15. What was used to put James to death?

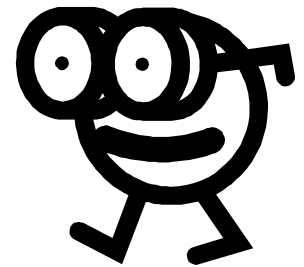


Down

2. In prison, Peter was bound with two _____.
3. Peter was let out of prison by an _____.
5. Peter was sleeping between how many guards?
7. Whose house did Peter go to after he was freed from prison?
8. John's brother who was killed by the sword.
10. Herod was waiting until after _____ to kill Peter.
12. Who was King Herod trying to please?
13. Who answered the door at Mary's house?



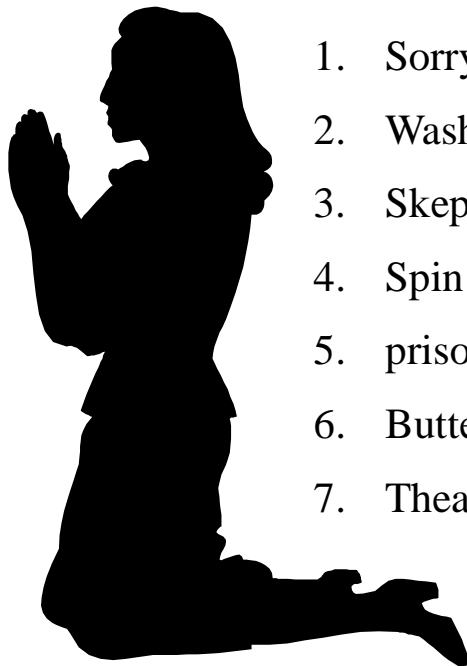
A Closer Look



ter	self	s	ly	hing	er	toma
yard	s—ic	rry	ater	give	sp	te

Cross out the letters in the words below that match the letters in the boxes above. There is only one perfect match for each word.

Write the word that is leftover on the same numbered blank.



1. Sorry
2. Washing
3. Skeptic
4. Spin
5. prisoner
6. Butter
7. Theater
8. Churchyard
9. Waste
10. Spraying
11. Tomato
12. Godly
13. Forgive
14. himself

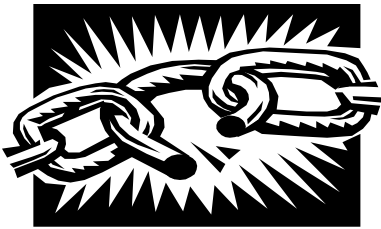


“ 1 **Peter** 2 3 4 5 ”

6 7 8 9 **earnestly**

10 11 12 13 14 ”

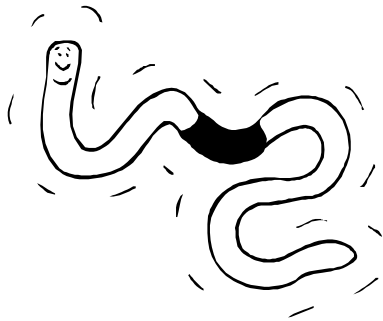
Acts 12:5



Trusting the Lord

Complete the word search and find the words to fill in the blanks to the memory verse below. When you find all the words, the hidden message will be revealed.

B U T T H E S W G A
 O R D O F R E N R G
 O D C O E M I R N S
 M T I W P U E N O E
 U U S E C S E L A R
 D N R S T T D O N V
 A O E D I I N C G A
 R R R E E A S E E N
 A N D R S R P R L T
 E A S N I A H C S D



ANGELS
ANSWERS

ARREST
CHAINS

EMPEROR
MURDER

RESCUING
SERVANT

SOLDIERS

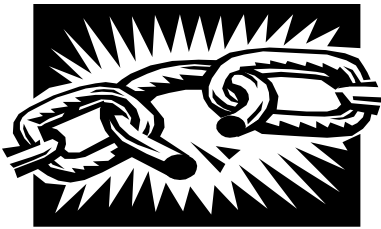
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Acts 12:24

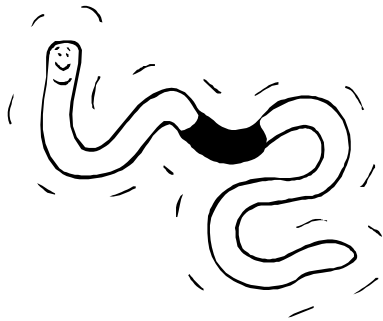




Trusting the Lord

Answers Sheet

B	U	T	T	H	E	S	W	G	A
O	R	D	O	F	R	E	N	R	G
O	D	C	O	E	M	I	R	N	S
M	T	I	W	P	U	E	N	O	E
U	U	S	E	C	S	E	L	A	R
D	N	R	S	T	T	D	O	N	V
A	O	E	D	I	I	N	C	G	A
R	R	R	E	E	A	S	E	E	N
A	N	D	R	S	R	P	R	L	T
E	A	S	N	I	A	H	C	S	D



- | | | | | |
|---------|--------|---------|----------|----------|
| ANGELS | ARREST | EMPEROR | RESCUING | SOLDIERS |
| ANSWERS | CHAINS | MURDER | SERVANT | |

“But the word of God continued to increase and spread.”

Acts 12:24



Aim Questions

Answer the following questions about today's Bible Adventure.

1. What did King Herod do to James and to Peter?
2. How did the Church respond to Peter's imprisonment?
3. Tell in your own words how Peter escaped from Prison.
4. How do you think prayer helped the situation?
5. Why do you think the people at the prayer meeting were hesitant to accept the words of Rhoda the servant girl?
6. How do you think we could be better at recognizing God's answers to prayer than the people in this chapter were?

The Holy Spirit gave Stephen the boldness to speak the truth of Christ to the ruling Council of Israel.

**Acts
Chapters
12:1-25**

*"But the word of God continued to increase and spread."
Acts 12:24*

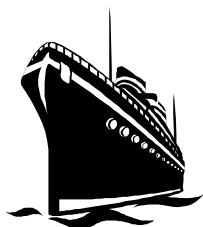


Hello! !!!

Is anyone out there?

What is our direct link to God?
Complete the puzzle below to find out.

The last letter in



The first letter in



The second letter in



The first letter in



The first letter in



The last letter in



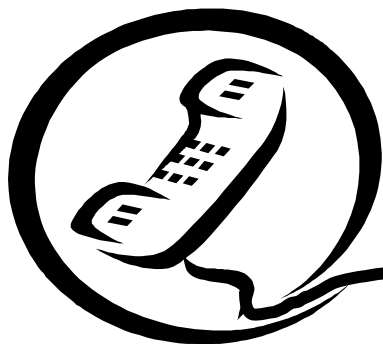
Pray Every Day

Start →

P	R	S	T	V	M	A	R
L	A	Y	B	R	A	Y	X
G	I	P	E	P	D	P	F
K	H	R	A	Y	I	R	J
X	L	Q	C	S	U	A	W
B	P	Y	A	R	P	Y	I
W	R	Z	V	D	H	J	K
T	A	Y	P	R	A	Q	R
M	F	G	L	N	Y	S	T

↑
Finish

Find your way through the maze by spelling the word PRAY over and over again.



Prayer Line MY PRAYER RECORD



Every Day

Confess any sin that would hinder your communion with God.
Worship with Praise and Thanks (for answered prayer among other things).

For each day of the week, **list two or three specific things** you can pray about (such as an opportunity to share the Gospel with people in these categories who need to know Christ). Use this guide for a few weeks, and watch God work.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Missionaries	Friends and Teachers at School	Family (including grandparents, etc.)	People in my Neighborhood	My own needs	World Leaders	Church Leaders and Ministry Needs
Answers:	Answers:	Answers:	Answers:	Answers:	Answers:	Answers:

Where's
Peter?

Find the letters that spell the word
P E T E R
in the picture below.

